

## Text on practice

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### Oorsprong

My most recent work is a four minute video essay called 'Oorsprong'.

The film touches themes as family tradition, the passing on of esthetics , objects and values. These themes derive from the subject of wearing earrings. In the essay I ask myself the question why I , just as most women in my family, don't have my ears pierced.

By showing isolated objects and portraits that tell about the tradition of the esthetics within my family, I work towards the part of the essay that shows the close bond between me and my grandfather. The title refers to the dutch word for 'origin' and is a wordplay, it contains the word 'oor' with means 'ear' in dutch. The structure of the film is build up by mainly still shots of isolated objects, portraits and shots of body parts (ears and hands) of family members. A voice over is narrating the story from my perspective.

I started the process with sketching out shots. I made storyboard cards so I could physically make edits before I started to shoot. After I shot the footage I made an edit of all the images and after that I wrote the voice over. Trough playing around with the images the narrative became more clear. And the proces of the image edit was also a proces of finding words, so in the end the voice over wrote itself. Intuitively knowing that there were lots of connections, but not starting with text or a waterproof narrative gave me the freedom to work in a way seems to suit me.

It is the first film that I made completely on my own. Therefore I tried to keep everything as simple and clear as I could. Going trough the whole creative process took away lots of boundaries and assumptions I had about filmmaking. I really enjoyed the process and the challenge of constructing a story trough image text and sound. The process of molding material into something you can't think of at the start is very exciting to me, and something I always longed for but could not really find within one image pieces. But I imagine that getting to know this way of working could also effect my approach on making 'one image pieces' or other works.



I've always been extremely interested the subject of how we identify people through appearance. Why people wear what they wear, what their general aesthetics are, what that tells about them and their world. Only after I finished the film I discovered that this subject was one of the themes in my film. Despite my interest and even my former studies and work (art direction and costume for fiction film) I never considered it a clear source for my work. It is very freeing to see that my daily interest and my 'work' are not separated things.

**Stroom (Working title: *Sroom, stream, drift, tide, flow, flux...?*)**

The making of Oorsprong gave me some confidence about my instincts. Now knowing that I can trust on my visual ideas, a new kind of process has started. It is more spread out, more explorative and more about reflective on what I try out. The project is called 'Stroom'.

The aim is to make a film, but right now I'm trying out both moving and still image.

The point of the film's departure comes from the following story

For the biggest part of my life my grandfather lived in the south of France. Most of his time he spent his days at a place called Loucambonet. A twelve hectare piece of land with nothing but an old ruins, once a silkworm plant, build from the stones from the river that runs along it. (lelijke zin, aanpassen). Over the twenty-two years my family renovated the ruins, starting with cleaning out dust and old bones from kettle until it was a place to live in.

The river that runs along the land takes a bite of the land every winter, when the river grows strong and wild. The edge of the land is always receding. I used to visit this place at least two times a year, to spend time with the land and with my grandfather.

Recently my grandfather moved to the Netherlands, because he is ill, and no longer able to take care of himself. His greatest longing has been to return to the place he called home for many years. I can empathize very strongly with this feeling, because the place is very important to me as well.

In this project I want to play with themes as change, physicality and shapeshifting, fluidity vs. solidity, disappearing, cycles, the memory vs the present. Using for example elements like the receding river-line and stones from the river. I'm also interested in the idea of the silkworm plant the ruins used to be. The idea of a natural (organic) process vs. an industrialized (mechanical) process of transformation : caterpillar eats leaves, produces a cocoon, human spins silk thread from the cocoon etc.

The given of my grandfather's homesickness and expected departure from life could function as a departure point from a broader exploration of the themes I mentioned above. Or it could stay personal and intimate, this is something I am still figuring out.





I learned that I have to be very clear about my intention during a shoot with another person. I need to know for myself what I want to do, if I want to ask direct questions or start an open conversation for example, so I can communicate that clearly to the person (in this case my grandfather) behind the camera.

Recently my grandfather became so ill that I was not sure if I wanted to proceed making a film plan. But last week his state was good enough and he agreed with a small shoot. It resulted in two set ups that I might use, us making compositions of stones from the river and him drawing a map from his memory that shows the receding river lines over the year.

Another idea is to make shots or pictures of the stones that my other family members collected and brought with them over the years. Maybe they have strong preferences for certain shapes, sizes and colors. It could be interesting to show, and to see if it could tell something about their connection with Loucambonet.

Right now I need to play with the material, and think of how to expand it without filming with my grandfather again, which might not be possible. This summer I'll go to Loucambonet, so I can gather material of the river, silkworms and river-stones. The structure of the film, and the uncertainty of my grandfathers involvement are the biggest challenges. As for the structure I'm thinking about chapters. The silkworm part could be another chapter from the part about my grandfather for example. But it is too early to make decisions like these and a lot more can be explored first with my already existing material. The technical part can be quite challenging but I decided to try to keep the camerawork simple so I can do everything myself. I think I especially need some advice and help on the sound and sounddesign. I hope to finish it just after the summer, so I can start something new for the second year, but it is hard to tell because I'm not sure about the duration and structure yet.

Both Oorsprong and Stroom involve my grandfather and derive from a personal point of view. Oorsprong had a very clear and simple point of departure ( the wearing of earrings ) to tell a more layered story where Stroom has a more layered less clear departure. I, the subject of the stones, can have that function.

The way Oorsprong was filmed, isolated staged objects or scenes proposes a method I could continue with. Both tell a story about a close personal bond but also tell something universal. The use of the voice over is something I feel hesitant about. But I don't know yet how to do it differently, because it will be a very subjective and probably poetic work. I picture a film with more rest, where a voice over is more suggestive.

I'm very curious where this project will lead me. Working with a wider narrative is very exciting and challenging to me. In the near future I want to continue to make images as part of the development of my own visual language. Both making 'stills' and drawings and photographs. Stills meaning 'one image ensenated scenes' like they where from a fiction film, which would include working with costumes , mise en scene, location, props etc and making collages are part of that. Weird stuff. I want to do those in a free flow, apart from any restrictions or clear concepts. Because I now know that they'll become part of a visual world that will also feed my potential film language. First I thought that my desire for making both narrative film and less narrative image was a very separated thing. Now I'm more confident that they can exist next to each other and be part of the same world.

